

# John Frenz

State Representative • District 64

## 1999 Session of the Indiana General Assembly

### State budget provides tax cuts, funding for education

The new state budget will make a very real difference in the lives of many Hoosiers. Some of the highlights include:

*Program Funding*

- Public education: Statewide total formula funding increase of an average of 4.7 percent in calendar years 2000 and 2001, with minimum guarantees of funding increases of at least 2.5%. Funding was increased for both at-risk and academic honors programs. Local schools and libraries also received \$76 million in technology funding.
- CHOICE: \$5 million increase per year in funding for home health care for the elderly
- Higher education: appropriations were increased by 7.0 percent in fiscal year 2000 and 4.7 percent in 2001
- Vocational education: incentives for school corporations to provide programs in which high employment demand exists
- A new \$50 million 21st Century Research and Technology Fund that will promote high-tech industries located in Indiana
- Social services: Funding for the seriously mentally ill is increased by \$3 million in 2000 and \$6 million in 2001. MRDD programs will receive an additional \$9 million in funding.

*Savings to Taxpayers*

- Elimination of county welfare fund and county welfare administration funds from local property taxes (two-year savings: \$67.6 million)
- Elimination of inventory tax for 87 percent of farms and businesses (two-year savings: \$129.6 million)



Rep. Frenz with Princeton Mayor George Taylor.

### Wrongful Death

The survivors of unmarried adults will soon be able to seek legal action against the party or parties responsible for wrongful death.

The bill would entitle the victim's family to recover damages stemming from medical, hospital, funeral and burial costs. In addition, the survivors may seek monetary compensation for the loss of love and companionship. However, survivors may not seek punitive damages from the party responsible.

Currently, Indiana is the only state that denies survivors of single adults the opportunity to pursue a legal remedy.

### Hoosiers will save \$672 million over the next two years in tax cuts

- Homeowners: a new income tax deduction for property taxes up to \$2500
- Senior citizens: an increase in the income tax deduction from \$1000 to \$1500 and an increase in the property tax deduction for seniors from \$1000 to \$2000
- Dependent children: an increase in the income tax deduction from \$1000 to \$2500
- Small businesses and farmers: property tax "add-back" repealed so farmers and business owners can deduct the amount of their property taxes from their state income taxes
- Renters: increased the income tax deduction from \$1500 to \$2000

### Additional \$200 million approved for Indiana roads

I was pleased we appropriated an additional \$200 million from the state general fund for local roads over the next two years. This is in addition to the regular funding from gas taxes. Many of you have indicated your strong desire to see us do more road improvements throughout the state.

I have included the breakdown for our district below. The amounts listed for each city are in addition to the total for the county. The amount appropriated to each city is based on the population of the city.

|                |           |
|----------------|-----------|
| Daviess County | \$649,005 |
| Washington     | \$115,452 |
| Gibson County  | \$833,334 |
| Fort Branch    | \$28,801  |
| Francisco      | \$7,488   |
| Hazleton       | \$5,927   |
| Mackey         | \$1,275   |
| Owensville     | \$13,483  |
| Patoka         | \$9,884   |
| Princeton      | \$92,455  |
| Somerville     | \$4,618   |
| Knox County    | \$894,342 |
| Vincennes      | \$211,933 |
| Pike County    | \$368,393 |
| Petersburg     | \$27,893  |
| Posey County   | \$724,929 |
| Griffin        | \$2,458   |

### How to Contact Representative John Frenz

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### Education

ISTEP Gateway Examination -- House Enrolled Act 1050 allows students who do not pass the ISTEP Gateway Examination to graduate, provided they meet certain other requirements. The legislation also provides that the case conference committee determines eligibility for graduation of certain students with disabilities. The act also provides that all students in Grade 10 must take the examination.

Reading Skills -- Senate Enrolled Act 632 establishes a reading diagnostic program designed to improve skills among younger students. The program allows children in first and second grades to receive an individualized plan if it is determined they are having difficulty reading.

Educational Standards -- A roundtable has been created to develop educational standards for Indiana students. Standards would be set for each grade level, easily comparable to national and international standards, written in an easy-to-understand manner, and distributed to students and parents.

Postsecondary Proprietary Education Grants -- Combines the higher education award program for students at postsecondary proprietary educational institutions with the award program for students at other institutions of higher learning.



Rep. Frenz with Gov. Frank O'Bannon.



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1-800-382-9842

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## House publications available

The following publications can be requested free of charge from my Statehouse office by calling toll-free 1-800-382-9842:

*Relax . . .* -- This informational booklet for senior citizens discusses a variety of issues, from taxes to health problems to leisure activities.

*Higher Education* -- A 24-page publication for those interested in pursuing a higher education degree, detailing many Indiana colleges and universities as well as occupational and vocational schools.

*Guide to State Agencies* -- This booklet details various agencies within Indiana state government, listing phone numbers, functions and general areas of responsibility for each of the state agencies.

*Hoosier Fun and Facts* -- Designed for elementary school-aged children, this information and activity book teaches students about their state through a combination of text, puzzles and other educational activities.

## Is the address label on this mailing correct?

Please check the address label on this mailing for accuracy. If there are any errors or if you are receiving duplicate mailings, please contact my office at 1-800-382-9842. Every effort will be made to correct the mistake.

I appreciate your assistance in keeping the mailing list updated. This will ultimately result in more efficient delivery and substantial savings to taxpayers across the state.

## State Phone Numbers

|                              |                |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| State Information . . . . .  | 1-800-457-8283 |
| Indiana House . . . . .      | 1-800-382-9842 |
| Indiana Senate. . . . .      | 1-800-382-9467 |
| Governor's Office. . . . .   | 317-232-4567   |
| Secretary of State . . . . . | 317-232-6531   |
| Motor Vehicles. . . . .      | 317-233-6000   |
| Natural Resources. . . . .   | 1-800-622-4931 |
| Utility Regulatory. . . . .  | 1-800-851-4268 |
| State Tourism . . . . .      | 1-800-289-6646 |
| Department of Correction. .  | 1-800-680-5889 |
| Department of Education . .  | 317-232-6611   |
| Department of Health . . . . | 317-233-1325   |
| Family & Social Services . . | 317-233-4454   |

# Frenz votes to protect consumers

**Stopping “slamming” & “cramming”** -- House Enrolled Act 1628 gives the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC) authority to impose a civil penalty on a telecommunications provider if the provider has violated the law or rules prohibiting the unauthorized switching of telecommunications providers or the billing of unauthorized services -- known as "slamming" and "cramming."

"Slamming" is the term used to describe the telecommunications practice of changing a person's phone service provider without the customer's permission. "Cramming," on the other hand, refers to billing for services not authorized by the customer.

**Telephone solicitation** -- House Enrolled Act 1434 imposes stricter regulations on professional solicitors and fundraisers while protecting telephone customers.

The act requires a professional solicitor to disclose several items to the attorney general, including the portion of a contribution that goes to the solicitor and the portion that actually goes to the charity.

It also requires professional solicitors to disclose many of those items at the beginning of each call, including the name of the company and the phone number and address of the location from which the call is being made.

**HMOs** -- House Enrolled Act 1309 establishes an external procedure for grievances against HMOs. The act would require the Indiana Department of Insurance to hear grievances filed by individuals who have been denied services by an HMO.

The review would allow a physician who specializes in the treatment in question rather than a general practitioner or other physician to determine whether the patient should receive the requested services. Furthermore, the bill has provisions to ensure the review is done in a timely fashion. In life-threatening cases, the review will take place within five days.

This act provides a less costly and less time-consuming procedure for HMO grievance review. The independent reviews would be paid for by HMOs except for a \$25 filing fee paid for by the consumer.

**Annexation** -- Residents will now have the right to argue in court that they do not need to be annexed because they already have adequate police and fire protection and road maintenance. The legislation requires the municipality to demonstrate that the annexation is in the best interest of the people in the affected area.

Residents will have 90 days to file a remonstrance, and the petition must contain the signatures of 65 percent of the affected property owners in order to proceed. Present law requires 75 percent of the owners to sign.